

THE
PHILOSOPHER:

IN
THREE CONVERSATIONS.

PART II.

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]



THE

PHILOSOPHER:

IN

THREE CONVERSATIONS.

PART II.

With a SECOND DEDICATION to

LORD MANSFIELD.

LONDON,

Printed for T. BECKET, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXI.

THE
PHILOSOPHER:

IN
THREE CONVERSATIONS.

PART II.



LORD MANSFIELD.

LONDON.

Printed by J. Baskerville, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXIII.

DEDICATION

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD MANSFIELD.

MY LORD,

IT is with some reluctance I, once more, beg a few minutes of your Lordship's attention.—Since I addressed myself to you, on a former occasion, some things have happened which I cannot suffer to pass unnoticed.

The incidents of the political world, like those of a private family, let men more and more into the dispositions and characters of its rulers. We are screened, and often effectually, from every

PART II.

a

man,

DEDICATION.

man, who attends only to what we say : but actions bear about them some marks of our inclinations ; and from a diligent attention to them, men may generally guess at the state of our minds. —To judge of others by myself, that state is rather fluctuating ; sometimes virtuous ; — sometimes vicious ; — and the uniformity, which is so much talked of, by moralists and divines, is seldom found, but among those prodigies, and monsters, which are great deviations, from the common standard of humanity. The characters of men in general are mixed : seldom so excellent, as represented by panegyrick ; — seldom so detestable as satire would insinuate. Your Lordship's is not made up of those materials only which your advocates bring together ; nor yet of those alone, which serve the purposes of your libellers ;

DEDICATION.

libellers;—but principally of the former; and partly of the latter.—The human mind is a spring which has nothing perfectly analogous to it in the natural world: it *sends forth sweet waters and bitter*: it cherishes the noblest virtues and the meanest vices: the view of it generally perplexes: to come at any estimate, I am obliged to arrange its qualities: and I sometimes contemplate them as I do the company at some of our fashionable assemblies, where genius and folly, virtue and vice; where every thing that is noble, and every thing that is infamous are connected and blended in a confused and tumultuous association.

I have been led into this train of reflections by the many things which have been lately brought to view to

DEDICATION.

the credit and discredit of your Lordship. — I am persuaded, that but few men in public life, scrutinized as you have been, would appear to a greater advantage. Those who had fewer faults, would generally have fewer excellencies; and those who had no vices, would probably have no virtues. Yet, with even these sentiments, I cannot help being surprized at your conduct. — That a youth of spirit should dare to drink a health which was forbidden and treasonable, in the high fallies of convivial madness, I can account for; and though an entire enemy to the pretender, I might have done the same thing in the same circumstances; merely to shew my courage. That the prepossessions of your education, and an attachment to some of its most erroneous principles, should not be shaken off

DEDICATION.

off by you, all at once, may not have been to your real dishonor.—But—my Lord—at your time of life, that you should enter upon, and pursue a system of politics, which your judgment must despise, and which is odious to your country; I cannot reconcile to what you owe your character, or your interest: and I am obliged to leave it among those many inexplicable riddles which may be found in the lives of men.

I venture to say, it is against your judgment, because there are hardly any of its parts, which may not be condemned in your own words.

You have solemnly said *, “ The people are almost always in the right :

a 3

the

* This and the following quotations are out of Mr. Murray's speech at the Bar of the House of Commons, on the Westminster election, in 1741.

DEDICATION.

the great may be sometimes in the wrong; but the body of the people are always in the right."—The body of the people, my Lord, detest the present administration; and have shewn the highest resentment of every measure taken upon its distinguishing principles. They are, therefore, treated with insult and contempt; called mob, scum of the earth, &c. and this not only by the very delicate creatures of a court; but in the senate; and in that part of it which is formed by their own representatives; if those can be called so, whom they have never chosen.—I myself heard a frenchified member of an English H—— of C—— (just returned, I suppose, from a smuggling tour) pertly deny the people of his country any regard: "they could have no opinion," he said, but in that house; and their sentiments

DEDICATION.

sentiments were given by their representatives." I should have been glad to have asked him, whose sentiments he generally expressed, and whether he thought there was a town or village in England, left to its inclination, which would not duck him in a horse-pond, rather than chuse him for a representative. This gentleman is one of the ablest servants of the ministry; and he certainly speaks the sentiments of his masters.

On the question, whether the civil magistrate is to call in the aid of the army, you delivered the following most admirable sentiments. "It will be said, I suppose, that the civil magistrate is not strong enough; shall he not then call in their assistance? I beg leave to say, the law of England will not suffer

DEDICATION.

a supposition of that sort to be made; for, if a sheriff who is armed, (I am aware of the objection) I say if a sheriff who is armed with the civil power of his country, or if a bailiff who is armed by the law, if he should give an answer, for not returning the king's writ, that he was resisted; though the fact be true, the law considers it as a fact not to be supposed, and an action lies against him at the suit of the party; and why?—because it is a libel on the government to suppose the civil magistrate, not strong enough.—The troops are kept up, by annual bills; not for the assistance of the civil magistrate; that would be for a reason that lasts for ever.—Can any civil magistrate send a warrant to the guards?—Is there such a warrant known to the law?—No man, Sir, would wish to live to see
that

DEDICATION.

that day when the civil government of this country cannot support itself without the assistance of the military. I will be bold to say, when it is not, that civil government is undone: for it is then, not the law, but the military power that governs; and I hope in this country, the bare word of a Tipstaff, will go as far as the commands of a Lieutenant General.—Suppose, Mr. Speaker, a case of the most extraordinary necessity, when the civil magistrate is really overpowered, and there is fire set to the town; shall not the troops then be called in to his assistance? I think I put the objections as strong as I can. That fatal argument of contending for an exception to constitutional principles; that fatal argument has brought us many times to the brink of destruction.”

In

DEDICATION.

In St. George's fields, my Lord, the soldiers were called in when the civil magistrate could not plead extraordinary necessity; when he could only "smell a riot;" and your Lordship knows, they did execution on the innocent people. Indeed we now know, the doctrine of administration is that, "in suppressing a riot, the constitution knows no difference between a red coat and a white one *."

No words can more severely condemn some proceedings of the ministry in the affair of Mr. Wilkes than the following. "Nothing is clearer than that no freeman is to be imprisoned but according to law: what, not if the king knows he is coming to attack him?—The argument was specious, and

* Sir R.—d A.—n, on Gillam's trial.

DEDICATION.

and the power of judging was trusted somewhere ; and it took away the whole liberty of the subject. Every man was imprisoned for a *mandatum domini regis*.

—Suppose there comes an extraordinary case, never within the intention of the legislature, that produced the dispensing power, which dispensed with all the power of the legislature.” How finely might this case be applied to the late Middlesex election ! The power then exerted, was a dispensing power ; it was in fact, that of the crown ; but in the modern method of shewing its prerogative.—I could produce many more instances, where the opposition of your Lordship’s sentiments to those of the present administration is as striking as in any I have laid before you : but I will not tire your patience.

That

DEDICATION.

That the present political system is odious to your country, I do not assert only from the information of anonymous scribblers. I do not ground my opinion on the authority of orators in the opposition; for I have no faith in most of the patriots. I ground it on the general murmur which is heard through the land. You may say, that this has been raised by the clamors of seditious demagogues; and the libels of political writers. The causes are not equal to the effect. By such means, a temporary, and partial uneasiness might be raised; but nothing so lasting, so settled, so general as the present. The people have attended, upon the whole, with great patience, while the merits of our late administrations have been considered. In such a case, they cannot well be imposed upon. Faction

DEDICATION.

tion may misrepresent; and make them dissatisfied with single acts of a virtuous government; but it might as well attempt to make them insensible of the light and influence of the sun, as to make them insensible for any considerable time of the real merits of a good administration. — And who are to bring about this great effect? There are but few in the minority, who have the confidence of the people. They will not again be easily brought to countenance the farce of a Pulteney or a Pitt. — Political scribblers have little credit—besides what has been given them by your Lordship: and they are hardly ever believed by the people, until administration has expressed its resentment; and you, my Lord, have gone out of your way to punish them.

DEDICATION.

I am sorry to think, as I generally do, that this leads me to the most probable account of some strange steps which have been taken by your Lordship.

That you cannot believe your own doctrine, in the matter of libels, to be agreeable to the spirit of the English constitution, however it may be screened by a few precedents in the K—'s B—ch, I am as sure of, as I can be of almost any thing that is shut up in the breast of another. But, to the dishonor of human nature, even you, my Lord, must be revenged: and the constitution of your country, which had been your study and your praise, to the laws of which you owe your reputation and your fortune, must be meanly and treacherously wounded.

So

DEDICATION.

So imperfect are the best systems of human government, that those who administer under them, are often brought into situations where the laws afford no immediate direction. The rule then arrives, in a good government, from the natural rights of mankind, and the welfare of the people, which must be the basis of the constitution. Ours, my Lord, is such a government; it has that basis: and when the laws are not explicit; or when they are equivocal; and the magistrate has a choice in his conduct; we judge of the propriety or impropriety of that choice, upon principles as clear and certain as any laws can possibly form.—Of what importance then, with such a people, will be any sophistical and quibbling opinion, though it be formed by the genius of your Lordship? It may serve in court, where

DEDICATION

where quibbles are arguments, and where you obtain victories by perplexing an adversary, and leaving him no materials for a long speech. It may effectually protect a judge from the pursuits of justice; but he may be deemed guilty by the wisest and best of his fellow citizens, and be an object of the detestation and curses of all the people.

How different might have been the fate of your Lordship!—Great abilities forced your way in the road of fame, notwithstanding the prepossessions which had arisen from your youthful connections and imprudencies. You got, early, into some of the most important trusts, under a government, to which you had been supposed an enemy. Those trusts you have discharged, upon the whole, in the noblest, and

DEDICATION.

and most useful manner: but—*non omnis fert omnia tellus*!—you, my Lord, with all the talents of an orator, and all the brilliant ones of the legislator and judge, have wanted the magnanimity which is requisite to the conduct of even a common man. You never could look power in the face. You have been obsequious to every administration. And you now support one, which you must heartily despise, and which would be dissipated by the breath of your mouth, if you dared to open it against them. You have thus set up yourself as a mark for the arrows of satire; and they have been shot into your inmost soul.—How greatly have you been an object of pity! Without dispute, the greatest man of the age, in abilities, rank, and influence; with all the power of a vast empire in your

PART II. b hands;

DEDICATION.

hands; employed principally, for some years, in a contest with political libellers!—

But why, it has been often said by the few friends who know I am a writer,—“Why would you address such a man as Lord Mansfield? The Ethiopian may as well be expected to change his skin, as Lord Mansfield his manners: they are the result of his natural turn of mind, confirmed by his education, and the course of his behaviour in public life. He is a most egregious coward; and such a man naturally seeks shelter under power. Lord Mansfield will never commit himself to the people of this country; for he thinks one of the regiments of guards, a firmer security than the esteem and affection of the whole kingdom.”

Some

DEDICATION.

Some thoughts of this nature had often occurred to my own mind. I believed it was rather improbable, that you could be induced to change your measures, unless your own mind inclined you so to do.—My reasons for thinking that you are not entirely without such an inclination, may appear very curious and whimsical to your Lordship.

In the first place, I take for granted, that no man of your understanding, can be easy, while he is doing wrong. In the short course of my own life, and with an understanding much inferior to yours, I have had sufficient experience to know this to be a maxim. Though I never could keep myself free from follies and vices; yet I never could indulge them with impunity; even when

DEDICATION.

I was doubtful in my mind as to their nature, my heart soon resolved me; and my determinations to do good, have been often the consequence only of what I suffered from having done wrong. It is with good reason, therefore, that a state of virtue has been called a warfare. The pursuits of ambition might very deservedly have the same appellation. The mind undergoes the same kind of struggle: the difference being only, that in one case it resists vicious inclinations; in the other, the principles of virtue. While a struggle of the former kind is kept up, I am under no apprehensions for the state of my mind. Even divines will say, I am in a state of grace. And while that of the latter kind is found in the politician, there remains a possibility of his recovery.—That to me
has

DEDICATION.

has ever appeared to be the case of your Lordship. When your views of interest and ambition have left you free in the cause of truth and liberty, you have served it with an ardor and enthusiasm, which could arise only from innate genuine regard. You supported it when you could without danger, at the bar, on the bench, and in the senate. Indeed, you only, as it were, snatched your opportunities, as the saint does his pleasures, where all the laws gave leave, and where your grand views could not be injured.

Whenever you appeared the courtier, and the advocate for administration, your weakness as a politician, was always known; that of having sensibility, and a conscience; that of having your own judgment against you.—What

DEDICATION.

comparison between the talents of a Fox and a Murray!—And yet it is well known, who afforded Pitt the most frequent and most glorious victories. The one was hardened, and insensible as brass; the other was *tremblingly alive all over*.—The same adversary now meets you on higher ground, and sometimes makes you quiver with apprehension. You must often despise the man; but you dread some of his weapons; and you cannot defend those parts at which he is ever so desperately aiming.—An enemy more guarded, and perhaps more formidable, though not so fiery and daring, you have lately found in Lord Cambden. He has had some rencontres with your Lordship, to which I have been a witness; and his success against you was owing to the “law in your mind, warring against the

DEDICATION.

the law in your members." You were kept down by an irresolution; your heart did not animate your voice and countenance; and I felt with you all the misery of your situation. What a pity, my Lord, that you should give such adversaries, so great an advantage! They can make the best use of it, for their talents are very great. They would, however, almost as soon oppose their bodily strength to that of a wild bull, as their abilities to those of your Lordship on equal ground. But they have ever found you tied down to a ring: and they may, with very little danger, bait and worry you to death.

I forbear at this time, to lay open, what I know to be said by those who are often with you, of the uneasiness of some of your private hours. I will only

DEDICATION.

observe in general, that the same weight of real business has been sustained by men of abilities much inferior to yours—with ease; without that anxiety;—without those starts of apprehension and horror!—which frequently disturb your peace; and will, gradually, destroy your health.—These, my Lord, are the effects of a mind divided against itself:—and there is always room for persuasive arguments in such a case. It may be thought presumption in one to imagine I can produce such as will affect your Lordship. You may think me impertinent in having any thing to say to you; and suppose that I have concerns of my own which might more properly employ my attention. Perhaps it may be so. However, I act upon a commendable principle. I am a member of the community; and am

DEDICATION.

interested in its welfare, for myself, and all I hold dear in the world. You, my Lord, are a member of the same community; and only a man like myself; much superior in abilities; and occupying a station of great honor and usefulness. As your actions are many of them of a public nature, and immediately affect the interests of my country; I not only have a right; but it is my duty to attend to your conduct; and, as your actions and motives are only human, they may not be above my comprehension. It is possible, in common with thousands who view you at some distance, I may be mistaken or misinformed. It is your Lordship's duty to remove such an error; for one of your greatest objects should be the good opinion and esteem of the public. —I have ever regarded you, my friends
have

DEDICATION.

have thought, with great partiality ; though I am not a Scotchman ; nor do I ever intend to seek your favor or your notice. I wish you to employ your abilities in removing the distresses, and in restoring the prosperity and credit of your country. If you cannot effect it in your present station ;—quit that station ;—you have no use for its emoluments ;—and you derive no honor from it. If the present servants of government cannot be influenced and directed for the public good ; in God's name, leave them to compleat their own disgrace. Retire into your closet ; and set your genius at liberty : call up the noble principles of your mind : and with the experience and knowledge you have acquired, you may certainly point out to the people of your country, such a method as may save them. I should then

DEDICATION.

then be the first to laugh at my own visions; and among the foremost in adopting, almost implicitly; and in endeavoring to carry into execution, the plan you should propose.—Would to God, I could place your interest, your fame, your happiness, in so striking a view, as to induce you thus to secure them!

You are now, my Lord, verging towards the limits of your life. Ambition, and other passions impel us in youth; and oppose the most tempting prospects, to the admonitions of conscience. Those die away in age: but conscience gains strength: and at last, becomes the principal, if not the only source of joy and sorrow. There never was a bad man happy in his old age. The view of the mind is inverted; and
he

DEDICATION.

he has no prospect but his past life.—
If, my Lord, the people of this country
are mistaken in their judgment of your
present connections and conduct, your
understanding and heart will furnish
consolations which will over-balance
their reproaches. Your days will pass
happily; and your nights in repose:
and you will leave the world with full
assurance of the care of God; and a
provision suitable to your merit; and
of that future justice from men which
they are, at present, incapable of ren-
dering.—But, my Lord, if they are
not mistaken; if, to their reproaches,
you cannot oppose the testimony of your
conscience,—you must be unhappy.
Power may protect you from violence;
and may load you with honors; but it
must leave you, at last, to the reflec-
tions of your own mind. The natural
timidity

DEDICATION.

timidity of your disposition will increase; and though you believed not in heaven or hell, in spirits or goblins; it will raise up forms and spectres from every injury you have given; torment you with apprehensions and fears: and, if not distract your mind; destroy your cheerfulness and peace. And instead of looking forward with that trust in providence, which is the fruit of virtue; instead of exulting in that immortal fame among men, which your genius might have obtained; you will be consigned to eternal infamy, as the creature of a Bute, the associate of a Sandwich; the agent of a wretched administration, without talents, and without virtue.

I am,

My LORD,

Your lordship's most obedient,

Humble servant,

The AUTHOR.

THE
PHILOSOPHER:
IN
THREE CONVERSATIONS,
PART II.

—Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti: si non, his utere mecum.

HOR. Ep. 6,

THE
PHILOSOPHER:
IN
THREE CONVERSATIONS



Handwritten text, likely a library accession number or date, appearing below the stamp.

THE
PHILOSOPHER.

SECOND CONVERSATION.

PHILOSOPHER, COURTIER, WHIG,
CLERGYMAN, *of the established church.*

The reader is to suppose the company met; any proper compliments paid: and then, the courtier to say, I engaged my reverend friend here to be with us, in order to guard the interests of the church, if they should be brought under consideration: and, I think, we cannot well adjust the affairs of the nation; and leave out those of the church.

PHILOSOPHER.

WE may not, at this time, have much to say of the church. I am very glad, however, to see your friend, as I believe him to be, not meerly a man of office; but a scholar, a gentleman, and a citizen.

PART II.

B

CLERGYMAN.

Sir, you are in the humor to compliment.

PHILOSOPHER.

Not I indeed. I may be disposed to say what I think in a manner the most likely to keep you all in good humor; and to secure your candor and indulgence for me, if in our conversation, I should happen to differ from you.

CLERGYMAN.

You need not fear; we shall not bear hard upon you.

COURTIER.

We will though; as hard as we can.

WHIG.

We will procure an information against him, for defamation, or a libel: what say you?

COURTIER.

If he deserved it, as some of your scribblers in the papers do; that would not be amiss.

PHILOSOPHER.

Have patience, gentlemen, till I have printed any thing; and then, proceed against me as you please.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

3

CLERGYMAN.

I believe the gentlemen would not be disposed to hurt you.

COURTIER.

No, no;—for what should we do then! what would become of poor England when her monitor and reformer was silenced and lost to her!

PHILOSOPHER.

I can bear with your vivacity, Sir, without relinquishing the liberty of scrutinizing the affairs of my country; animadverting on the conduct of my superiors; even thinking that I can rectify some of their mistakes.

WHIG.

I dare say you can: and we are now come to reap the fruits of that liberty; to know what, in your opinion, would be the best measures to recover the order, tranquillity, and happiness of this country.

PHILOSOPHER.

You lay my task before me in such a manner, that it, almost, frightens me:—

B 2

but,

4 THE PHILOSOPHER.

but, as you say, I am only to give my opinion, in the freedom of a friendly conversation, I will propose my thoughts, nearly as they have occurred to myself, whenever I have reflected on the transactions around me.

And, in order to be methodical; and, peradventure, because I speak before a divine, I think, it will be proper to mention some measures, which are highly thought of by many; but which, in my opinion, will *not* recover the order, tranquillity, and happiness of this country.

WHIG.

I perceive then, that I am singled out.

COURTIER.

You are afraid; I suppose, for some late riotous and seditious measures.

PHILOSOPHER.

I shall, probably, animadvert on the measures you refer to; though I may not deem them either riotous or seditious.—I think there is a candor which is virtuous in politics as well as in religion; and we should always have very good reasons for contradicting
any

any man's pretensions. There may be hypocrites in both, but we are not justified in saying of any man that he is a hypocrite, unless we have unquestionable proofs to go upon. I will therefore suppose, that the steps which have been taken to procure a redress of grievances, and to reform abuses, have been, generally, well intended.

COURTIER.

I cannot allow it; especially in the case of Mr. Wilkes. Let it be supposed that some of the proceedings against him have been unjustifiable: can you think that the conduct of his adherents has been well intended? Have they not held up, as the patron of liberty, a man profligate in his principles and morals? Have they not insulted the king, by crying out Wilkes in his hearing, as if he had been an equal, and a rival in some violent contest? Has it not, in London, been dangerous to walk the streets, when the liberty-boys were out, bullying, and knocking down their fellow-citizens, unless they did homage to the idol

6 THE PHILOSOPHER.

of their choice, or joined in a riot, to save their country ?

PHILOSOPHER.

What you alledge has a great deal of truth ; but you do not assign the causes of the evils you point out : I will give you my thoughts on that subject in the best manner I can.

In the affair of Mr. Wilkes, I believe you must admit, that administration was first to blame, in bringing down the king into a contest with a subject.

COURTIER.

How could it have been avoided ? Is he not brought down into a contest with every man who is prosecuted for a supposed crime ?

PHILOSOPHER.

Not, as in the present affair. Every supposed criminal is prosecuted in a regular and usual manner ; which, I think cannot be truly said was the case of Mr. Wilkes. His offence was treated by the ministry, as a private and personal affront ; and was conducted on the principles of resentment. The people, therefore, adopted his cause ; not
because

because they held his character in estimation, as they did that of the king; not because they approved of the paper he had written; or wanted to screen him from punishment; but, because they saw, the whole power of administration was to be employed on the principles of revenge; to punish him, probably, beyond his demerit; without regard to law, or the established rules of the constitution.—It is fit, that the passions which are designed to oppose revenge, should be, as that is, prompt and vigorous in operation.—As the ministry proceeded in their oppressions, the people increased their attachment; until the one became ridiculous in its revenge, and the other in its protection and generosity.

I have already hinted my disapprobation of setting up Mr. Wilkes as the patron of liberty. He is not equal to such a character. The people, in general, have not sufficient confidence, either in his abilities, or his principles: the first are lively; but not of sufficient strength for the affairs of a great nation; the others have produced strange

effects in his private manners ; and, I think, it would not be prudent, to trust, too much, to them in the concerns of the public. He may be of service to his country, by maintaining, with spirit, his single contest with the ministry and the H—— of C——. In this, I wish to have him countenanced and supported. I doubt not, but he will have justice : and then, I hope, to see him a patriotic and useful senator ; watchful for the interests of his country, and ready with his advice and assistance ; but avoiding the affectation of a demagogue, and being the idol of a riotous mob.

COURTIER.

By a necessary consequence, you would disperse the Supporters of the Bill of Rights.

PHILOSOPHER.

I do not think, there is any thing more to be expected from that society, than the meer adjustment of Mr. Wilkes's affairs : when that is done, it will disperse of course. It has, lately, had something to do in elections, but with what propriety or effect, I am yet to learn.

WHIG.

Well ; but what think you of a measure, which seems to have had the general approbation ; and has been adopted by several countries and boroughs ; that of petitioning the throne ?—A measure very regular ; warranted by the spirit of the constitution ; and even by express law ?

PHILOSOPHER.

I think the method of petitioning the throne, on many occasions, the best that can be : but that it is not suited to every occasion. If the object had been to remove one or more of the ministry ; and the H—— of C—— would not have applied ; the best method to be taken, would have been, for the people, as counties, and boroughs, to have preferred their petitions. This is a regular method of asking for what a king of England has a power to grant ; and, generally, does grant, as a political favor and condescension. But the object of our late petitions, was of infinitely greater importance ; a fundamental, established principle of

of the constitution; without which it must be dissolved; it could not exist. This principle was, in one instance, destroyed; and great injury committed, by one part of the community, on the other. The injured part, after some ineffectual struggles, makes its complaint to the chief magistrate;—and petitions him:—to do what?—to destroy the offending part.

WHIG. What could have been done?

PHILOSOPHER. What, yet *remains* to be done: for, you know, no satisfaction has been obtained. The request of the petitioners was, that the king should dissolve the parliament; and commit the members into the hands of their constituents. But, however regular their method of application might be, it was not calculated to answer any good purpose. Administration is thought to have influenced the house to the measure, which is the great subject of the petitions, and which is, justly, complained of. Is it, then, to be supposed, that

that it will dissolve a house so much at its devotion? I wonder, it did not occur to those, who conducted the business of petitions, that they were pursuing a measure which would, not only, prove fruitless in its immediate consequences; but would, also weaken, their party; by throwing out of their interest, and perhaps, into the hands of administration, a great number of their friends.

Hardly any man, can be now a stranger, to the general method of obtaining a seat in the H— of C—. It is very seldom, that a member is returned, without incurring an expence inconvenient to his private fortune. God, only, knows, with what views such expence is, at any time, incurred. We have, often, reasons to suspect, that a member who pays for his seat, conceives that he has a kind of private property in the house, purchased by his money; and which he is not willing to give up, but on a valuable consideration, or at the end of the time, understood to be fixed for the duration
of

of parliament. This man must be alarmed at the thought of a dissolution, in the first or second session ; and would, generally, be an enemy to any one who proposed it. If the whole house had offended, the measure then would have been more just, though not more effectual. In the present case, the house was divided ; and the decision complained of was carried, not without difficulty, and by, only, a small majority. But, according to the petitions, the house was to be branded with infamy ; and punished, without making any distinction of the friends from the opposers of the vote. Those who had endeavoured to prevent the harm, as well as those who had done it, were to be sent back to a country, where they had, but lately, almost ruined their families. You may say, that they would have been returned without expence. That might have been the case of some ; perhaps of all of them. But shew me the member of parliament who will take your word for it ; and having a seat, which he has procured by corruption, will

will chuse to relinquish it for the chance of being returned without expence, by a people whom he knows to be venal; and whom a sum of money would tempt to break through any resolutions they may have made. I think, therefore, the measure was not judicious, as it was not likely to obtain its end; and it was very probable, it would alarm and alienate from them, many friends who might have been useful to the petitioners.

COURTIER.

Well; what think you then of remonstrances?

PHILOSOPHER.

I think of them, as of the measures of men, who were determined to go on as they begun: men who had more zeal than knowledge.

COURTIER.

Come; say they were seditious: I am sure, you must think them so. Then must be an end, of all dignity, and even power in government, if the king is, not only to be remonstrated with in the name of a body
of

of people; but to be talked to, and scolded at:——

PHILOSOPHER,

—Not quite so bad, neither; though bad enough in truth.—I have not used myself to think of kings as gods; or even their vicegerents, but as other magistrates may be; yet I was hurt at Beckford's behavior; it was unjustifiable; it was insolent. The chief magistrate of a great empire, should never be addressed or instructed, but in consequence of deliberation and counsel. He represents the majesty of the whole people, in one great department of government; and it is politic; it is necessary to keep up an opinion of his dignity. To address him, familiarly; and talk to him, as you call it, is to forget the magistrate, and the method of inducing him to his duty; and applying to the passions of the man.

WHIG.

All in the wrong: nothing but what you must find fault with. In the name of goodness, what is to be done? Let us know your scheme.

scheme. It is strange, that you should think every body blind but yourself.

PHILOSOPHER.

Every body? Has every body been consulted on the measures taken in the opposition? Have the most sensible and independant people in the country, known any thing of them, till they have been determined upon, and, many of them, carried into execution? — But, by the way, Sir, I must let you know, that you greatly wrong me, if you suppose I think myself wiser than every man whose conduct I can find fault with. If I had been in the circumstances of many of the advisers of the measures in question, it is probable, that I should have advised as they did. I know, it is quite different, to judge of things in a closet, and at leisure; and to judge of them in a noisy assembly, in the hurry of business, and pressed on by impatience. A man who looks on, may see more of the game, than the persons engaged: it does not, therefore, follow, he would play it better.

CLERGYMAN.

Come, come; it is not necessary, that you should take the kind of pains, you now do.

COURTIER.

No, no; let us proceed to business. Now, Mr. Philosopher, let us have your scheme of reformation.

PHILOSOPHER.

I believe I have no scheme, peculiar to myself. Most of the things which I wish to see done; have been wished for by many besides me. In giving them the appearance of a plan, I may, possibly, give you one proof, to the many you have had in your lives, that it is much less difficult, to pull down an edifice, than to build one up, or even repair it.—However, as I have gone thus far, I will proceed, and venture to give my opinion on a subject, which ought to have the attention of every man; but which seems to be left to a few only, who are not, always the most capable of doing it justice.

What I should wish to see attempted, at this time, is, not to change the form of government;

government ; which I have, always, thought impracticable, and dangerous ; but to remove the abuses which have been admitted into the present ; and to prevent their taking place for the future.—These evils are, generally, thought to arise from a vicious administration, and a corrupt H—— of C——. And, how to remove them, is the most important question, that can now be agitated. Administration will not allow itself to be vicious : and the k—g, whose prerogative it is to form it, will not think so ; administration, therefore, will not, willingly, break up ; nor will the k—g, willingly, dismiss it.—The H—— of C—— is a more untoward subject still. It has to plead, the appearance, of having been chosen by the people ; will deny the charge of corruption and influence ; and will not dissolve itself ; it cannot, regularly, if it would ; the power of doing it, being in the k—g ; and, from him, it cannot well be expected, as the charge is grounded, on its devotion to his ministry.

WHIG.

I do not see, then, that we have any constitutional, and regular remedy.

COURTIER.

Then, have recourse to unconstitutional, and irregular ones: the consciences of your party are not so scrupulous as to prevent you.

PHILOSOPHER.

I think myself, there are not sufficient remedies, which a meer lawyer would call regular, because they are not to be found in any written laws: nor would there be any constitutional ones, if our constitution were deemed a finished system; made up of invariable customs, and laws; and never to be broken in upon, altered or amended. This strengthens my objections to the method of claiming our rights, as founded principally on precedents: they are founded partly, on precedents, but principally on nature.

CLERGYMAN.

I thought it to be an established political maxim, that the only way to keep a govern-
ment

ment pure, is, frequently, to bring it back to its original principles.

PHILOSOPHER:

It is so; supposing no material changes to have happened in the circumstances of the people: then, the government so reduced, would suit their circumstances, and make them happy, as at its first institution. But what end would such a measure answer, when the circumstances, manners, and principles of a people are totally changed: it would be, like applying the police of a village, to the regulation of a large, and populous city. The original frame and structure of the English constitution, suppose a state of things very different from the present. There are some of its principles, indeed, which will hold good at all times. It placed certain powers in the crown, which were evidently for the good of the community; it reserved a power in the people to deliberate and determine in the making of laws; and to influence all the material parts of government. This was very well, while

the powers were exerted in their due bounds ; and were never given up or betrayed. It was not to be expected, that men would, at its institution, provide for the abuse of them. In time, abuses took place ; some suitable provisions were made against the return of similar ones ; which, very possibly, was all that could, then, be done. Upon the introduction of every abuse ; a remedy should have been applied. In proportion as men advance in improvements ; they acquire a greater dexterity in eluding the obligations of law, as well as morality ; the methods of restraint, should therefore, be improved : for, a law or a precept, which would have kept an ancient Briton in obedience, would be laughed at, by a subtle and modern one. This makes me of opinion, that, at the same time, we make institutions and laws for the purposes of government, and establish a plan or design, to the great principles of which we may recur ; there should be ample room and power left, of changing the parts of it, as our circumstances change ; and improving

improving it, as we improve in knowledge and advance in refinement.

WHIG.

There is such a power.

COURTIER.

Where?

WHIG.

In the people.

COURTIER.

The people indeed! We should be finely off, if the people were to alter, at their pleasure, any parts of our constitution!

WHIG.

That power, however, is in them; and they have used it, in more instances than one, with great propriety and advantage.

COURTIER.

Yes; but precedents, you know, give no authority or power!

PHILOSOPHER.

I understand your allusion, Sir. Precedents are not to be implicitly followed; because, we know men act unreasonably, as well as reasonably: yet, they ought to have

some influence.—In private life, it gives additional authority to an action, which is agreeable to truth, to say it has been the invariable practice of certain wise and good men. It gives no authority to one which is not; but when evil is mistaken for good. In this light, I consider the proceedings of the convention parliament, at the revolution; and those of, what is vulgarly called, the rump, at the death of Charles the first: the one affords a good precedent; the other none, or a bad one. In all political transactions, precedents are of consequence, as they give proofs of any powers, which, from disuse, may possibly be called in question. Every regular and temperate exertion of popular influence is useful, in this light, however it may be, in its immediate effects.

COURTIER.

So! I perceive, then, the people are to be our reformers!

PHILOSOPHER.

The power of the people, must generally, if not, always, be the reformer: but, how
to

to get that power properly directed, is, sometimes, a great difficulty.

COURTIER.

There is no better method, than distributing beer and gin among them; for they are never patriotic till they are drunk.

PHILOSOPHER.

I am sorry for their drunkenness, but I never heard, it gave any concern to administration. *In vino veritas*, is a proverb that has truth in it, at least so far, that what has occupied the mind, is talked of with more freedom and courage in, than out of liquor.—But this is not to my present purpose. I dislike the riot of a mob, as much as you can; and think, it may be, often, as subversive of order, and as pernicious to liberty as the intrigues of a bad administration.—The difficulty which gives me concern is, to get the will of the people, freely and properly expressed; and their power shewn in readiness to put it in execution.

CLERGYMAN.

The will of the people, is supposed to be expressed by its representatives; and its power, is, what is called, the civil power.

PHILOSOPHER.

To express and execute the will of the people was the original purpose of a parliament, and a civil power; and that purpose was, for some time, answered. But, it has not been, always, the case. Is it the case at present? Is the will of the public supposed to have been, lately, expressed by the H—— of C——? And is the civil power, the only force by which the laws are executed? Or does its influence, bear any proportion to its real weight in a free constitution? This being the case;—the first institutions, being perverted and abused;—

COURTIER.

—You would have them set aside.—

PHILOSOPHER.

No, Sir,

COURTIER.

I thought you would; and a constitution, entirely new, introduced in their room.

PHILOSOPHER.

I am obliged to you, for your good opinion of my understanding; or rather, for the attention you have given to what I have already said of Utopian schemes. I have, all along, spoken against total and sudden changes, as, generally impracticable, sometimes fatal. My opinion is, that the institutions of human government, like all human things, are imperfect; or, however perfectly they may be adapted to any present case; yet, as the circumstances of most cases are fluctuating, those provisions will require variation and improvement.

WHIG.

Allowing this; and that the state of this country is as you have described it: what, do you think, is to be done?

PHILOSOPHER.

You will allow, that there must remain, somewhere, a power of remedying abuses; and making any necessary alterations and improvements: this, in my opinion, must arise from the people.

COURTIER.

Let it be so; for, I long to know, how you will bring that respectable body to act: I mean, the people of the British dominions, as they are, at this day.

PHILOSOPHER.

I mean the same people, as, to the best of my knowledge, they are at this day: for I would have as little to do as possible with imaginary folks. I must confess, that the people, in general, appear to me so ignorant, that they can be said, only to feel when they are happy or miserable; and not to understand the causes of their being so. This is the case of all the common people in the world. These feelings, however, constitute one general rule of government, without an attention to which, it is impossible it should be beneficial. They are, always, able to express them, though they may not know the causes from which they arise.

COURTIER.

If they do not know the causes, how will they provide proper remedies?

PHILOSOPHER.

I think the people, hardly ever, capable of providing those remedies, especially, in an empire of considerable extent; and when many movements are necessary to a single effect on the community.

CLERGYMAN.

I do not see what you would have done; unless you wish to have the country divided into many little republics: and then the people will have all the consequence, which you seem to think they should have.

PHILOSOPHER.

Let me wish what I may; you know I could not accomplish such a scheme. But I do not wish it; and I must remind you, that I am not forming communities in the air. If I was of sufficient consequence; or could make myself attended to; my ambition would be gratified, by being able to suggest hints to those who have the greatest capacities, and the highest employments in our country; such as might be of service to them, in restoring its credit, and happiness.

The

The kingdom is, already divided, and formed into parts, in which the people might have an influence, more agreeable to the present state of things, and more conducive to public happiness, than that which would arise from small republics. "It were good, my lord Bacon saith, that men, in their innovations, would follow the example of time, which, indeed, innovateth greatly, but quietly; and by degrees scarce to be perceived: for otherwise, whatever is new, is unlooked for; and ever it mends some, and pairs others." The divisions of the country, which now subsist, therefore should still be adhered to; because they will serve every good purpose which we want to have accomplished; they have remained for ages; and the people have been accustomed to them. I mean those of counties, hundreds, and tithings; the civil officers of the divisions retaining their names, and many of the powers of their offices; but to be all elective, by ballot, in each division. The persons, who filled those offices, would, of course,

course, be of the best sense and character ; whose residence among the people, would enable them to know what was their best interest, and to express their general sentiments.

COURTIER.

And so, these tithingmen, and high constables are to be our legislators.

PHILOSOPHER.

No :—but the materials of all laws, should be collected from them ; and digested into form, and suited to the general interest, by persons independant of smaller divisions, and who are deputed by larger ones ; such as counties, and, perhaps, some boroughs. These should consult, and act in conjunction with the nobility and the king. In short, the legislature should be as it is now, the king, lords, and commons in parliament assembled.

CLERGYMAN.

But how is this senate to be obtained ?

PHILOSOPHER.

I suppose the material parts of it existing; the king, and the house of lords; and I have no reason, but to wish their continuance; some provisions being made against the abuse of their prerogatives and privileges. A H—— of C—— there must be; but something different from the present.

WHIG.

No doubt:—but how will you procure it?

PHILOSOPHER.

Supposing the civil offices filled up, as I have said, the deputies for the H—— of C—— might be chosen by the civil officers; or by the freeholders, and freemen themselves, by ballot, and once a year.

WHIG.

And this is your silent work of political reformation; thus, you avoid innovation?

PHILOSOPHER.

As much as I can. I do not give you my thoughts as the best that may be conceived. My lord Bacon's direction is undoubtedly good; and I should be glad to see it literally

observed; and all the causes of our grievances removed. If you can let the causes remain, and remove the effects, I shall be very content: or, if you can point out a better method than I do; and with less change and innovation; I shall rejoice in giving it the preference. We all complain of the state of things. Every man should think of some regulations for it. In a multitude of opinions; we should, probably, find the right one: at least, we should keep up a spirit of enquiry; which would be much more beneficial than an indolent acquiescence, and effeminate despair.

WHIG.

I do not wish to see this spirit damped; and I am pleased at hearing of any well intended plans for the improvement of our affairs. But I cannot help objecting to yours; I do not mean that it is not well intended, and plausible; but that it is visionary and impracticable. It is almost impossible to change the customs of a large kingdom; though you may prove them to be pernicious

nicious ones. Our state, seems to be like that of some patients in the gout; who are obliged to continue the habits which gave the disorder, though it hastens their death.

PHILOSOPHER.

I have been, sometimes, of that opinion myself: and thought, the utmost our state-physicians could do, was to apply some lenitives to sooth our uneasiness, and to lessen the wretchedness of our dissolution. I hope, this is not the truth; and that we can bear some material changes in our habits and manners; and recover to a considerable degree of vigor and happiness. My method may not be the best to bring about this purpose: and, I, only, think it the best that has been yet pointed out.

COURTIER.

Doctors differ: and the patient's best chance of recovery, arises from the possibility of their not agreeing to leave him any prescription.

PHILOSOPHER.

I have so little opinion of my skill, that I would not offer one, if I thought, it was to even be tried. I repeat to you, that my utmost wish is to excite others to employ their thoughts in the same manner; who, in every respect, must be better qualified than I am. The present state of our public affairs is, on all hands, allowed to be perplexing, and dangerous. No subject of consideration, to an Englishman, can be of equal importance; and every man should endeavor to furnish his hint. *Interdum vulgus rectum videt.* No man's advice should be overlooked: by giving him attention, if you should not think proper to adopt his opinion, you engage his heart in the interest of his country.

WHIG.

What you say is very true: and I raise objections to your plan, only to put you upon rendering it practicable and beneficial. I think a better method of preventing venal elections, would be, by provisions in acts

PART II.

D

of

of parliament, rather than by entirely changing the mode of electing. An oath might be drawn up for the candidate, which a man, of no religion or moral honesty, and who only preserved the appearance of honor, and pretended to the character of a gentleman, could not take, and bribe the electors. A ballot, is a new thing; and, therefore, to be avoided, upon your own principle of not innovating. Besides, among the common people, it would produce the worst vices, falsehood, hypocrisy, and treachery.

PHILOSOPHER.

I should be extremely glad, to have such an oath as you mention, offered to every candidate; and I believe it would have very good effects. But I do not expect such a thing from our present p——t. I admit the propriety of one of your objections to a ballot; that it would be an innovation: but I think the inconveniences attending its first introduction, would be recompensed by the advantages that would follow. In Venice, where all their elections are by ballot; and
 where

where for seven or eight hundred years, it has preserved them entirely free from the corruption we complain of, it was introduced with some difficulty; but it is, now, considered, as the principal regulation, which has given duration, strength and prosperity to such a government, in such a situation as that of the Venetians. It does not appear, then, that it is at all likely to produce the consequences, you mention: nay, it is more likely to lessen the number of vices in the people. They would hardly ever be tempted to sell their interests; because few candidates would chuse to trust a man whom he had corrupted, in a ballot, where he might follow his own inclination, and secure his bribe. I am certain the consequences cannot possibly be so bad as those of the present method of bribery and corruption.—But, it does not signify to me, what honest method is taken, as long as a house of commons is returned by the free, uncorrupted, voice of the people.

WHIG.

But I think, you said, it should be elected once a year. This would certainly create vast trouble, and expence: and the infallible consequence would be, that all candidates of moderate fortunes would be shut out; and those of great ones, or their tools, would always be chosen.

PHILOSOPHER.

Not if the candidates were to be at none of the expence of elections. This, falling upon the people themselves, would be greatly lessened from what it is now; and, as well as the trouble, would be chearfully born for the benefit which would arise from them.

COURTIER.

Well; now you have made a House of Commons; what is to follow?

PHILOSOPHER.

I have not yet done with the H— of C—. — The members, being chosen, should be liable to receive instructions; to have their past conduct examined into at the end of the year; and to be dismissed or continued,

nued, as they were approved or disapproved of by the people ; who, by assembling themselves, or by appointing their immediate delegates, would be able to judge and determine on their conduct.

CLERGYMAN.

I suppose, you think such a house, would be safe from the influence of corruption ?

PHILOSOPHER.

The only security against corruption, where public virtue is wanting, is a duration of parliaments, the shortest possible ; and it would be effectual, almost, to infallibility. It would be worth no man's while, to have a seat in parliament only for a year, to corrupt a county or a borough, except a Cornish one ; such as, upon my scheme, would not exist. I mean, that it would not be worth while, in the sense of our parliamentary jockeys.

COURTIER.

It is my opinion, that, upon such a plan, you would have no House of Commons.

PHILOSOPHER.

I do not think so.—In a trading country, I will allow, that interest is a prevailing principle; more so, than in one without trade.—Money, the great object of commerce, becomes a title to distinction; and its influence on public spirit, on manners, and religion is, nearly, alike.—In the church; with your leave, Sir; it is not uncommon to hear a spruce candidate talk of his hopes of preferment, with the highest relish of gain. Every thing becomes mercantile, in some measure. But, as it would be uncandid and unjust to say, that the church has not been, or cannot be supplied with men of real religion; so it would be to say, that the House of Commons cannot be supplied with men of integrity; and, who, having sufficient fortunes for their ranks, would serve their country without a bribe. In moral cases, we often, owe our security to the absence of temptations. It is the same in political ones: and it will ever be prudent to remove them in the one, and the other. Indeed,
those

those virtues are the most glorious which preserve men amidst temptations ; but they fall to the share of only a few persons, both in public and private life, and to them in few instances. In the regulations of government, the business of a legislator is to guard against all possible vices : he is never to give credit for the influence of any probable virtues : for, when he has left room for them, and they do not appear ; the consequence is mischievous : but, when he has provided for their absence ; the evil is not material in the failure of one or more of them ; and, if they come to his aid, their influence is highly beneficial ; and procures a degree of extraordinary happiness which he had not depended upon. The present method of filling up the H—— of C——, supposes honor in the candidates, and integrity in the electors : but, if both should be destitute of the virtues they are supposed to have, the end of the institution is lost.

WHIG.

It is evidently so, in the case of the present h—se. The remedy which you have hinted at, would be sufficient; but I am still of opinion, that it could not be introduced.

PHILOSOPHER.

It may be so. To me, however, the difficulty does not seem very great; not so great, but it ought to be got over, when the public happiness is in danger. What should prevent their people from assembling in parishes or tithing or hundreds, &c. professedly on public business. In the lowest assemblies, there would generally be some men of knowledge, and temper, who might regulate their zeal, and inform them when they wanted information.

COURTIER.

This would make the kingdom swarm with politicians; and their meetings would frequently exhibit Hobbes's state of nature, where every thing would be determined by club-law; and all would be confusion and
anarchy,

anarchy. If you could suppose these assemblies ever so orderly; those of hundreds and counties would have such numbers that every one should be furnished with a speaking trumpet to make his speech, and to assist in the public business.

PHILOSOPHER.

I never meant that all the people of a county or hundred should meet together on public business. I have expressly said, that the inhabitants of a tithing, should chuse their decennary, who is to represent them in the hundred; where two or more may be chosen to represent the hundred in the county. In this manner, there could be no numerous assemblies; and no confusion; the sentiments of all the people in the kingdom might be easily and peaceably taken, and laid before their representatives in parliament.

WHIG.

This does not seem to me to help us at all; for it supposes a state of things, and a method of proceeding which does not, and is
not

not likely to take place. For we have now, a H—— of C—— brought together in a different manner from that which you would have pursued: you say our grievances arise mostly from this: one would think, before you provide another, you should remove this.

PHILOSOPHER.

When the k—g will not dissolve the p——t, the people only have the power: but it is seldom expedient that they should exert that power. I believe it would be attended with bad consequences at this time.

WHIG.

Then there is an end of your reformation. Let the present H—— of C—— continue, and under its present influence; and I will defy you, or even an angel from Heaven, to restore our tranquillity and happiness.

PHILOSOPHER.

Suppose the sense of the people could be obtained in the method I proposed; or in any better one.

WHIG.

Well!

PHILOSOPHER.

And suppose the public opinion to be such as yours and mine, of the conduct of the H— of C—.

WHIG.

Very well!

PHILOSOPHER.

Every member might be instructed, that the present H—, being elected for seven years, should sit out its time: but, it should be required, that a bill be brought in, to limit the duration of future parliaments to a year only. This, being the general sense of the people, it should be represented as the foundation of a law; an inattention to which to be unpardonable at a future election. That then, having spoken in favor of such a law, and endeavoured, in every proper way, to procure it, should be the condition, on which every candidate should be elected, perfectly free; and without which he should not be elected at all.—What is there in this impracticable, or difficult? And, why should
it

it not be attended with the most desirable consequences ?

WHIG.

The difficulty and mischief which I have hinted at still remain. The present H—— will sit many years ; and, if it goes on, as it has begun, will reduce things beyond the power of any remedy.

PHILOSOPHER.

Such associations subsisting, it would not venture to do mischief. And, perhaps, if any alterations should be made in the constitution, they had better be some years, than some days only under consideration. Indeed, I should have no objection, if the spirit of the people would carry them through ; and they could keep their temper ; to have the country call back their offending members immediately, and chuse others in their room. But this is a measure bordering on violence ; it would give a pretence to violence on the other side : and nothing but mischief would be the consequence.

WHIG.

—And the other, which you propose, would be a measure to take place at so distant a time; that, if the people could now be brought to give instructions, in the manner you mention, when the time of election comes, they will have forgotten their former sentiments; lost their zeal; and be as open to corruption as ever.

PHILOSOPHER.

They would not be suffered to forget their sentiments; or to lose their zeal; by conversation, and by writings, their spirit would be sufficiently kept up; and they would be better instructed, than they could be for any sudden event.

WHIG.

But, supposing all these things may be done by the people: do you think administration would suffer the associations you mention? Are there not clauses in our laws against unlawful assemblies, under which they would fall?

PHILOSOPHER.

I believe not. Indeed, there can be none; to hinder the freeholders and citizens of this country from meeting upon any business. The society of the Supporters of the Bill of Rights is an example: I do not mean, in their dinners; but in the simple power of meeting.

WHIG.

Administration has done things as violent; as to adjudge such meetings unlawful, and riotous; and to disperse them by the military power.

PHILOSOPHER.

Hardly.

WHIG.

—But, if it did!

PHILOSOPHER.

If it did; and the people would submit to it; their liberties would be gone; and they would deserve to be slaves.

WHIG.

What would you have them do?

COURTIER.

—Fight, to be sure.

CLERGYMAN.

God forbid, we should have a civil war!

PHILOSOPHER.

I pray, God forbid it, as warmly as you can: but God forbid, rather that we should be brought into slavery; and that every thing should be forced upon us, by the dread of bullets. Indeed, the army, now, gives apprehension and uneasiness to many persons; but it cannot, yet, create any lasting mischief, if the people chuse to prevent it.

COURTIER.

The people are great and mighty, in your estimation: and, if they would but follow your advice, most happy consequences would ensue.

PHILOSOPHER.

If they will not follow my advice; I shall conclude that my advice is not fit for them.

COURTIER.

That is very-modest.

PHILOSOPHER.

Not so modest, perhaps, as you imagine.
—I have, already, hinted my opinion, that
every

48 THE PHILOSOPHER.

every people is, nearly, as happy as it deserves to be; because its happiness is, for the most part, in its own power. There are difficulties, frequently, thrown in its way; so there are, in the way of private persons; and, in all nature, happiness seems to be the fruit of labor; sometimes, of misery. A people, like an individual, that will be frightened at difficulties, must rest contented with what others may allot them; and be, often, ill-used, and insulted, in the possession of its small, and precarious allowance.

COURTIER.

To arms! to arms!

PHILOSOPHER.

Yes to arms!—Why not? Who will say, we must not, to arms, if we find arms to be employed against us?—But it is not necessary at this time; at least in the sense you mean. It would be prudent, however, to form such a scheme, as would counteract one which is said to be in forwardness, in the hands of administration;
that

that of introducing a military government. —I am far from insinuating, that this was the first intention of raising an army. We owe the establishment, and increase of our standing army, principally, to King William; and the princes of the house of H—r; who were greater friends to liberty, and greater enemies to the tyranny of a military government, than any of their predecessors; Alfred alone perhaps, excepted. But they had been born and educated on the continent; they brought over with them the propensities of their education: they had great military talents; and they were, always, in connections, that required an army. Their accession to the throne, had been happy events to this kingdom. There was, therefore, a national gratitude, and complaisance, in maintaining, and increasing an army, which, however convenient for the support of those connections, was neither allowed by the constitution of this country, nor consistent with its preservation, and happiness. These princes, and their ministers, seemed to

50 THE PHILOSOPHER.

have no conception of what might have been our naval strength ; they, probably, understood but little of our naval affairs ; and our ships were, but seldom, so effectually employed as they might have been.—I do not mention these things, to reflect on men, whose memories I greatly respect. But they had their failings and mistakes, which, however we may excuse, we need not adopt or adhere to.

WHIG.

Would you attribute the army to our late princes ; when all the world knows, it has been maintained and increased for the support of, what the nation considered as the common cause ; the balance of power ; and the preservation of the peace and liberties of Europe.

PHILOSOPHER.

I believe that balance of power to be an imaginary thing, which never actually took place in Europe. If it were ever so real ; and we were ever so much concerned for its support ; our wisdom would be to employ
our

our natural strength, and to give, only, that assistance, which our situation and circumstances favored the most.

COURTIER.

Why should not our situation and circumstances admit of an army ?

PHILOSOPHER.

Because an army is inconsistent with that liberty, which we claim, and endeavor to enjoy.

COURTIER.

In a strict sense, it may be so ; but, in human affairs, we can seldom adhere to what is absolutely best ; and, we are often reduced to a necessity of doing things, improper in themselves ; because they are expedient, and because we can think of no others.

PHILOSOPHER.

Whatever is admitted to be improper, cannot be deemed expedient. But there is not in the present case, the common pretence of expediency. I speak, without any intention to reflect on the bravery of our troops, we might have served our allies as

effectually without them, as with them. In the general scene of contention, armies are never wanting, if we have money to pay them; and we may, always, for the same expence, bring into the field a much greater number of auxiliary forces, than of our own.

CLERGYMAN.

I think, Sir, if we always employed foreign forces, and suppressed the military spirit of the nation, there might be cases in which we should repent of it.

PHILOSOPHER.

I am so far from wishing to suppress the military spirit of the nation; that I lament it as the principal inconvenience of having an army, that it renders the exertion of that spirit apparently unnecessary.—In the present state of the world, it has, always, been my opinion, that the man who gives up his arms, gives up the best proof (to be produced as an *argumentum ad hominem*) of his right to liberty. Every man should be, as every Jew was at the re-building of the Temple, with his arms in one hand, and his tools

tools in the other : for, whenever he commits his protection to another, he appoints a master, from whose tyranny, it will be, probably, in vain, that he shall attempt to escape,

WHIG,

This, I believe, is the most impracticable hint, you have yet given, that of making us all soldiers.

PHILOSOPHER.

I have only to say, that the man who will not be a soldier, deserves to be a slave.

WHIG.

But, how is it, practicable to be one, to any good purpose? The best reason for a standing army is, that without it, we should, on an emergency, have no army at all, that would be of any use to face the disciplined troops of our neighbors; that the military art is arrived at so high a degree of refinement and perfection, that it requires a great part of a soldier's life to become acquainted with it.

PHILOSOPHER.

I do not believe, there are sufficient reasons for such an opinion. I have attended at several reviews; and though I am not a military man, I can perceive that a great part of the discipline is unnecessary, because it does not conduce to a main end, or to the execution of any of the purposes for which an army is brought into the field.

COURTIER.

Here you might have to encounter some of the greatest geniuses of the age; many of whom, would desire no better sport, than an opportunity of meeting you in the field, and convincing you, by their military rhetoric, that a very good philosopher, may be a very bad soldier: and that the manœuvres of the closet, must yield the palm to those of the field.

PHILOSOPHER.

I should not declare my own opinion on this subject, if I had not known a person of great military experience in the same way of thinking. He said to me and others at
a mock-

a mock-engagement, that, while the men were shewing their tricks; a few steady companies, acquainted with the necessary principles of discipline, and under the conduct of a man of military skill, might destroy the greatest part of them.—The military art is, undoubtedly, brought to a very great perfection: but a considerable part of it, is for parade, and to keep the men employed.—If it were not so: it would not require, to learn it, any degree of trouble, or space of time, which, almost every man might not command. The first rudiments of the art; marching; keeping ranks; forming the useful columns, and figures of defence and offence, might soon be learnt; and, being frequently practised, and made to supply the place of our common, unmeaning, and brutal diversions, would soon become as easy to the people as they now are to the best regular troops. When any real improvement is made by our neighbors, it is only to take the same pains we, now, do to change

56 THE PHILOSOPHER.

the fashion of our hair, or to learn a cotillon ; and the improvement is ours.

WHIG.

The accomplishment of such a scheme as this, if it be practicable, would certainly be attended with great trouble ; and would not have its effects in many years.

PHILOSOPHER.

Some persons are mightily afraid of trouble ; and yet they must observe, that nothing worth having is to be obtained without it. It might be sometime, before we became our own masters, and the real protectors of our families, and our country : the sooner, therefore, we began to qualify ourselves, the better.

COURTIER.

But, pray, how is this scheme to be entered upon ?

PHILOSOPHER.

It is entered upon, already. We have, only, to enlarge the militia, so as to take in a greater number of the people ; to have them exercised, in regiments, twice a year,
for

for a month each time; and in companies, one half-day of every week; and my scheme would be accomplished.

WHIG.

Commerce, and agriculture are much obliged to you for inventing this scheme, which would take off the laboring people a fourth part of their whole time.

PHILOSOPHER.

A less time would probably be sufficient.

WHIG.

But, I believe it had been said, with good reason, that such a general militia would be impracticable; and if it was not so, it would certainly be injurious in a commercial country.

PHILOSOPHER.

I think it would not be impracticable: the present militia scheme may certainly be enlarged. It would be injurious only at its first introduction; and that only to trade. In a little time, it would be beneficial even to trade, by securing that civil liberty, and national reputation, without which it cannot flourish long.

COURTIER.

But, gentlemen, what is to be done with the army?

PHILOSOPHER.

What most considerate and impartial men, wish to have done with it. It may be lessened gradually, and disbanded; some of the guards, perhaps; the regiments of horse; and the train of artillery excepted. The men should be ordered home, with part of their pay, during their lives, for past services. They should be encouraged to attend and assist the discipline of the militia; into which, they might all incorporate, without losing that pay; and become persons who should have an interest in their country, and enjoy its several blessings. The officers should be served in the same manner; and reserve the same rank and pay in the militia, which they had in the army.

CLERGYMAN.

This is plausible; but I am of the opinion of my friend here, that it requires a kind of resolution; and so much trouble must be taken;

taken ; that but few of the people would care to engage in it.

PHILOSOPHER.

I should be sorry to think so ; because I am firmly of opinion, that if some measures of this kind ; perhaps different from, and much better than mine ; be not taken ; our liberties must be totally lost. Whether there be, or be not, a design, in any persons to enslave us, and to suppress the rough and uncourtly spirit of liberty ; it is very certain, things are in such a train, that, by their natural progress, we shall, probably, and soon, become subject to a military and arbitrary government. The power of the crown is, daily, though imperceptibly increasing. It commands not yet, in the voice of despotism ; but it, gradually, enlarges a permanent influence, which may, in time, render it despotic. The collectors of its revenues are dispersed through every corner of the land ; and hold their places in fact at its pleasure ; every additional tax increases their number ; and, of consequence, a power already

already too great. The army, more immediately, depends on it ; and, whatever may be the private sentiments of the officers or men, their military laws may oblige them to such a conduct, as will overthrow our constitution, before they are aware that it is in danger. Upon our present plan, this army is not to be lessened : for we profess to be guided by the example of our rivals ; and their military establishments are not lessening.—If our security had wholly depended on our army, we should, long ago, have been a province. Our safety depends, chiefly, on the good condition of the navy ; it may be increased by having a greater number of fortified ports ; and would be rendered as perfect, as the human condition can well be, by a general, and well disciplined militia. How different, our present condition. Our navy in a state, not to engage, on equal terms, with that of the House of Bourbon ; our fortified harbors few, and far from impregnable ; the country open to invasion in a hundred places ; and to be defended by an
army ;

army; brave indeed, and well disciplined; but small, and widely dispersed. Our people, in general, unarmed, enervated, and debauched; instead of defending their wives, and their children, would, only, lead the way in a flight; submit on any terms to the conqueror; or ignominiously, fall in a carnage, where the soldier would kill his thousands with security to himself; and which nothing would put an end to, but policy or fatigue.—This is an event, which is more than possible: it ought to be provided against; and in such a manner as, at the same time to secure the internal freedom and happiness of the country.—I should be very happy in seeing some steps taken towards making such provision, by those who have greater opportunities of political knowledge than I have. Their plan might be different from mine; and much better conceived; and they might derive information, and assistance from, almost, every well-wisher to the community. While such measures are wanted; and we do not hear that they are under consideration;

62 THE PHILOSOPHER.

tion; one can hardly forbear sketching out some measures, which may in some parts of them, furnish useful hints for the public service.

WHIG.

What you say, Sir, is very true; and the plan which you have sketched out, is, in several of its parts, very good. Suppose it was, in all of them, ever so excellent; how will you persuade the people to enter upon it?

PHILOSOPHER.

I have no such view. I have, more than once, told you, that I only wish to induce, much abler persons than I can be, to form a better than mine; and to put it in execution.

WHIG.

Well; but how do you think, the people might be induced to admit of any scheme, which would break in upon their present customs; though it was proposed by the greatest man in England; and was, in itself, the best that could be conceived.

PHILOSOPHER.

I wish I knew that secret !—Our learned friend here, is sensible, that in the most important concerns of religion, the difficulty does not lie in teaching men what they do not know ; but in persuading them to practise what they do know. It may be very possible to open the eyes of all the people in this country ; to shew them where their danger lies, and how to avoid it ; but it may be impossible to prevail on them to take those steps which are necessary to do so. And yet, there are considerations, which may go a great way with most men.—The great object of human life is happiness : it is the pursuit of all men ; though all do not place it in the same gratifications. In the pursuit, or in the possession of it, we cannot dispense with the idea of security. Precariousness, and a high probability of being deprived, renders joyless our best attainments. In a state of affairs, where every thing looks cloudy, and menacing, the most virtuous and enchanting pleasures are but partially enjoyed. In a community,

community, the parts of which are discordant and jarring; where power is, gradually, forming into tyranny; where splendor dazzles, but torments; and every thing looks threatening on private peace; we enjoy our friendship, and all the pleasing connections of love, with great abatements.—And can any man avoid looking forward to what may be the event: or is it wisdom, blindly to meet his approaching fate? Will it not then heighten his distress, to see one he loves, looking up to him for protection; when he has just discovered, that he has none to afford; and that he has given up one of the best distinctions of a man?—The soldier, to whom he delivered up his arms; and with them his courage, his manliness, and the charge of his safety, is, now, in another interest; and that dependance failing him, he sees no prospect, but slavery or an ignominious death.

COURTIER.

I fancy you have been lately reading the history of the conquest of Mexico; and that you are now got there in imagination.

PHILOSOPHER.

No:—I am in England: and I fear in a scene which will be realised, in no very long time.—A probable way to prevent it, is by inducing men to look forward to the natural consequences of the present state of things.—I have often imagined myself, in the state of a happy parent; having before me, the pledges of a real and virtuous love; the constant objects of my fondest attention. While anxiously careful of their safety, and health, I regarded them, gradually, forming under my hands, with a pleasure to which nothing on earth is superior: my mind never unoccupied by designs for their improvement, and introduction into life: I looked forward, with pleasure; and anticipated what I was to feel, at their establishment, and advancement in the world. I could not but consider these, as the rewards of my anxiety and pains; and acknowledge the goodness of God, which had made them so satisfactory and so pleasing.—At other times, I have changed the scene: and the

PART II.

F

more

more frequently ; because it is more agreeable to the present situation of men about me. I have supposed myself in doubt about the fate of those I held so dear ; to work at random ; to have no views I could depend upon ; to see a probability that my designs will be defeated ; and to know, that I am bringing up children ; either to crouch in a state of slavery ; or to act and suffer in scenes of confusion and bloodshed.—I have thought in myself, what subject of consolation I could have recourse to. If I could consider the evils before me, as unavoidable misfortunes ; the meer dispensations of providence ; and not owing to any ill-conduct of my own ; I might bear them, with resignation. But, I should not be able to think of them, without recollecting, at the same time, that they might have been avoided. If I, as well as most others of my fellow-subjects, had been inattentive to some of the most material duties of a good citizen ; if a few objects, only, had engaged my pursuits, and my time ; and I was incapable of acting my part,

in

THE PHILOSOPHER. 69

in the most important, and interesting circumstances of a community: a sense of criminal negligence, as the cause of my calamities, would give them, double their natural power of tormenting me.

COURTIER.

All the fruits of an imagination, too much at leisure; and on rainy days.

PHILOSOPHER.

I believe, however, they describe very nearly the cases of many persons in this country.

I am very sure, there are, in my acquaintance, many young persons who remain single; for this reason, that they will not multiply upon them, miseries that may soon take place. Others hesitate, and are not free from anguish, where it is almost impossible to be uneasy, in the near view of the happiest union, in the pleasing moments of successful love. I have known parents lament the prospects which opened for their children. All these unhappy people can be relieved only by themselves. They should

act for themselves and their children, upon a larger plan, than they have hitherto pursued: they should endeavor to open their hearts to public spirit, a love of their country; and in every pursuit, to consider themselves as parts of a community: they should endeavour to become brave, generous, manly; able to fight for and protect the weak, and the helpless, and to secure the public liberty, and happiness. They might not become so rich, as they now hope to be; but, every man would be his own master; be able to defend his family, and his property; and would have no occasion to pay a soldier for an insolent, and uncertain protection.

CLERGYMAN.

I wish the people would attend to hints of this kind. I hope, however, that your description of the state of some of your acquaintance, would not suit many other people.

PHILOSOPHER.

I should think it would most people of reflection,—There are but few, so attached to
the

the present administration; or so thoughtless, as not to see, that our trade is lessening; and what is worse, the number of our people. They must think, that these are evils which will not go off of themselves: they must be removed by wisdom, and contrivance: no such virtues can, now, be said to be generally employed for these purposes: and, how can men avoid being apprehensive?—The apparent designs, and actions of administration, are such as diffuse discontent, and contempt of government; and, to a cool, and candid observer, things must appear to be in no way of improvement, but rather of degeneracy, and confusion. I do not think, therefore, that considerate men can pursue plans of public and private happiness, with calmness, and pleasure, in such circumstances.—For my own part, I confess myself so thoroughly possessed with these apprehensions, that they affect, in some measure, all my enjoyments. I keep them, as much as possible, out of my private, and friendly connections; and

yet, I can never assist in any design, the effects of which are future, though it be the most humane, or generous, and the pleasure attending it the highest that can be, without feeling a transient anguish at the intrusion of a thought, that these effects will, probably, never take place. Schemes of public advantage, ornament, and grandeur, used to give me great pleasure. I was anxious for the completion of the plan for the improvement of our roads; and contemplated the vast undertaking with the delight I ever had in any thing so useful and ornamental to my country. The grand, and beneficial designs of inland navigation, I have attended to with, almost, the same concern with those who were immediately interested in them. In these cases, I exulted in the spirit of my country, and in the noble application of its wealth. I contemplated, in fancy, the addition, in various ways, which these things would make to our convenience and happiness; with what advantages our children would succeed us; how grateful

grateful to our memories ; and how desirous to improve and to enjoy what we left them.—All this pleasure is now, in a great measure, lost to me. I can hardly hope, that my countrymen will have the virtue to preserve, what they and their fathers have taken so much pains to acquire ; and I, often, imagine these works in ruins ; our roads neglected or broken up ; our canals choaked ; and viewed, with all those melancholy reflections, which we have, often, made, in tracing the remains of Athens and Rome.—New structures ; new towns, as it were, starting up, suddenly, about me, in all the neighbourhood of this enormous capital ; disturb the peace of my evening's walk. What are these mad people doing ! I often say.—They are enlarging the materials of an immense ruin ; they are adding house to house, and increasing their property, while they never think of what may be necessary to preserve them !—I carry this humor, home with me ; it lessens my domestic enjoyments ; and damps my social hours. I consider the

conveniences of life, arising from the various effects of human art, as evils, when no provision is made for their continuance. The contrivances are infinite, and exquisitely formed; but they are evils; unless the provision for their security be proportionably good, and to be certainly depended upon. While the mind is deprived of its brutal courage, it should be supplied with one more temperate and manly, under the direction of wisdom, and virtue; while the body is rendered less robust, it should be improved in its art and agility: and while we are certainly becoming more and more unfit to bear the accidents and misfortunes of a disturbed and ruinous state of things; we should be, continually, increasing our security against it. The child of a farmer, would, now perhaps, be killed by lying a night in the open air; or, by any of the common hardships of a time of confusion;—what then, would become of our fine ladies; and fine gentlemen!

COURTIER.

Ay;—and what would become of you philosophers?

PHILOSOPHER.

True:—we should all sink under any great public misfortune, and yet we do not guard against it?

CLERGYMAN.

By the way;—are not these things, a security to our peace? I mean, that our people are so fond of their various means of indulgence, and so sensible to the conveniences and refinements of their present state; that they will give up a good deal to preserve them.

PHILOSOPHER.

By such a conduct, they will give up what they intend to preserve.—I plainly perceive the force of what you hint at: for I often hear men say, ‘We do not seem to know
‘ when we are well; we wallow in riches
‘ and pleasures: and, why should we be un-
‘ easy in such circumstances: let the ministry
‘ be devils, if we can be merry and happy;
‘ if

‘ if we fall out, and come to blows, we are
 ‘ sure to change our condition for the worse.’

—This kind of talk is so futile and silly, it
 hardly deserves a serious answer. No man,
 in his senses, would wish another to quarrel
 with his enjoyments; and yet, he may de-
 spise him in the heighth of them, while he is
 inattentive to dangers that surround him, and
 he is likely to be, suddenly, plunged into
 misery.

CLERGYMAN.

—I beg pardon for interrupting you again:
 but, I think, that the great property of men,
 in general, among us; and, especially the
 fortunes which are deposited in the funds,
 will be a great check upon the passions of the
 people, and secure our tranquillity and peace.

PHILOSOPHER.

This may be true, in one sense. What
 you have mentioned, will prevent a great
 many persons from engaging in any schemes,
 on which administration may frown. Public
 credit, they say, would be destroyed, on the
 first general commotion. It might be injured,

at

at least for a time, by the best conducted civil war. But we hope never to see so great a calamity.—Every man should do all in his power to avoid it, not by bearing public injuries, and only looking on, while the constitution is gradually destroyed; but by publicly giving his opinion, and assistance, to get every injury redressed; and the constitution preserved and improved. Public credit would not be, at all, injured by such measures as these. It would be strengthened; for one of them would, certainly, be, the payment of the national debt. And when things are restored; it should be an object of public care, to prevent such an incumbrance for the future. If it should be necessary, or expedient to establish funds, and to create a fictitious property; let it be deposited in the hands of companies, on such securities, as would not be affected by every disorder in the political world. I wish the constitution free from every extraneous clog: it is, of itself, too apt to be impaired; and cannot bear, without

without injury, the weight of foreign inconveniences.

WHIG.

I have not been willing to interrupt you : but, you seem to be bringing matters to a settlement, without having taken into consideration, many things of great importance.

PHILOSOPHER.

I hope you do not think me vain enough to imagine, that I can point out all the parts of such a scheme, as would restore the public happiness. Indeed, I have a strong desire to rouse others into action, who are equal to the task ; that I shall endeavour to do, by every method in my power ; and that, I conceive, to be the only service which I can render to my country.

WHIG.

But, you know, we are met to talk freely of every thing, which we may imagine to be remedies in our present disorder, and improvements in our constitution.—While you were giving many good hints, for forming an House of Commons ; I thought you
guilty

guilty of a material omission, in not mentioning the present inequality of representation, arising from the state of our boroughs.

PHILOSOPHER.

When I said, the people were to chuse delegates, and representatives: I meant, the people in general, of a fixed property, to a small amount. Boroughs, on my plan, would act as counties: and none but opulent ones, would chuse a privilege, attended with an expence which they could not bear.

COURTIER.

I have something to put you in mind of too. One of the measures you mentioned, as proper to be taken by us, was to disband the army; excepting a few regiments, which you keep, I suppose, as the king's guards; and the patterns of military discipline. But, what is to become of our garrisons in Ireland, America, &c. and the troops of the East-India company?

PHILOSOPHER.

Those, who can conceive any benefit, that the East-India company is of to this kingdom;

or

or can think, that it has not been of great injury to it, in national reputation, industry, and real wealth, may give themselves the trouble to contrive schemes for its advantage. I have no objection, to having it left to the resentment of a people, whom it has cheated, plundered, and butchered; against every principle of nature, morality, and religion.

WHIG.

Either you do not understand this subject, or those who have been thought to understand it best, are mistaken. If you have any scheme, by which European nations may be prevented from visiting the East-Indies; you will do well to propose it. I should rather have said, it would have been happy, if they had never gone there, or to the South-seas either. But, if those parts are to be traded to; that nation will enjoy an advantage, which has the greatest share of the East-India trade; as long as the commodities furnished by it, are so universally used.

Those who can conceive any benefit that the East-India company is of to this kingdom,

PHILOSOPHER.

I would not hesitate to risque my reputation on the decision of this question; upon the genuine principles of philosophy and policy. Almost all the wealth which is brought into this country from the East-Indies, is just so much mischief; because it is above the reasonable price of the commodities we send there, and which we manufacture at home. The reason, why mines of gold and silver are an evil to a country, is, that they bring into it an influx of false riches: for all, above the reasonable wages of those who are employed by it, brings no real advantage to a country, where it represents neither the industry of the inhabitants, nor the value of their possessions and commodities. It is the same with a trade, in which the profits are enormous; and especially, when it serves as a cloak to rapine. Vast quantities of false wealth are accumulated, and brought into a country, where there is nothing to give it reality. In the same manner as Spain is injured by the mines
of

of America; England is injured by all the wealth which the East-India company brings, above the profit of a fair trade. It is in trade, as it is in morality; all the seeming advantages arising from dishonesty and violence, are not, in reality, either riches or happiness. This is the reason why countries, as well as individuals, while they appear to be increasing in wealth and prosperity, are, in reality, hastening towards ruin and misery. Integrity, therefore, is as much for the interest of, and as necessary to trade, as it is to morality. A nation would advance in strength and happiness, as it increased its riches; if they were all obtained by the virtuous industry of its inhabitants; and all its improvements and refinements would be beneficial. But riches are always hurtful, when they are fraudulently, or dishonourably obtained.—I could say more on the subject of the India company:—but I apprehend this is sufficient to support my opinion of it.

COURTIER.

I fancy he has lost money in India stock. However, let us leave this question, which is not so important as the method of treating Ireland.

PHILOSOPHER.

I presume no man, acquainted with the dispositions of the people in that country, will say, that it stands in need of troops, to insure it allegiance. It has often murmured; and, often, with sufficient reason; there are some difficulties in its present affairs; but none that an army could adjust.

WHIG.

Though I should dislike an army, to influence the government, or to awe the people; (unless it be the Roman catholics) yet I think an army necessary, as, without it, the country would be insecure against our enemies.

PHILOSOPHER.

Why should not an Irish militia, be a security as effectual to Ireland; as an English one to England? They might be pro-

THE PHILOSOPHER.

vided for, in the same manner. Or, if it be supposed, that the papists are not to be trusted with arms: and, if the protestant inhabitants could not furnish sufficient numbers for the militia; which, I believe, would not be the case; a reserve of the army might be made for this use, until the government could proceed upon a more enlarged and equal plan.—In the same manner, I think the Americans should be treated; and their security, or their obedience, not suffered to depend on an English army; which must, always, be small among them; and viewed with dislike and jealousy.

COURTIER.

The consequence of such regulations would, soon, be a disjunction of Ireland, and the colonies, from the mother country.

PHILOSOPHER.

I am sorry you judge from views of things so confined.—We, justly despise the man, who, in trade, or in the affairs of common life, hinders the prosperity of his child, and keeps him dependant, to secure his duty.
The

The same conduct in government is, altogether, as unjust, and impolitic.—There appears, to me, but two methods of securing the dependance of a province, and to prevent the danger of a revolt;—by establishing a military government, and depriving the people, intirely, of liberty;—or, by putting them in the state of natural subjects, and treating them with justice, and love. A mixture of the one, and the other will not do: people are, always, the more impatient of slavery, for having tasted the sweets of liberty. If an administration, therefore, be inclined to despotism, that despotism, should be established as soon as possible, and made compleat in all its forms: it would then be secure of its end; and, while its conduct was uniform and determined, would preserve a quiet and constant dependance. But, if government propose an end besides its own splendor, and power; and that end be the liberty and happiness of the provincial subjects; it must have some uniformity in its conduct; and not, in one instance, to

treat them as freemen; and in another, as slaves. It is the most provoking insult, to be told that you have your liberty; and yet to be controuled in every attempt to enjoy it. All the inhabitants of the British empire are called free born subjects, and are entitled to the common privileges of Englishmen: and yet, hardly any countries in Europe, independent, and unconnected, differ more from each other, in the privileges they enjoy, than England, Ireland, and America. In all nature, the only good foundation of power, is love: fear gives only the appearance of power; and interest is included in love. The father, who attempts to invert this rule, is secretly detested; his commands may be obeyed, but his child longs for independance, and contrives every method to obtain it. The government which observes the same conduct, has the same fate; it is detested, while it is obeyed; and a province, or colony, exerts every endeavour to break off an oppressive connection, and either to procure

procure a more equitable and happy one, or an intire separation and independance.

CLERGYMAN.

I must confess myself to be pleased with most of your sentiments; but, I think, they cannot be reduced to practice, as things now stand: you do not leave us a sufficient hold on our dependancies.

PHILOSOPHER.

Nay, if you think so, I know not what words to use, to convince you of the contrary. I cannot express myself better, than by saying you may hold them by affection and interest.

COURTIER.

Do you mean, that we should leave entirely to them, the internal government of their country, and trade with them as we do with the Dutch, Portuguese, or any other independant people?

PHILOSOPHER.

I thought I had been talking of the British empire, as consisting of several parts; and giving my opinion, that it ought to be go-

86 THE PHILOSOPHER.

verned as one people, by equal and just regulations.

WHIG.

Would you wish the mother country to have no distinction ; no power over the provinces ?

PHILOSOPHER.

There must be, somewhere, a seat of government, and a legislature to make laws for the regulation of the whole empire.

COURTIER.

Observe, Sir, you have said the whole.

PHILOSOPHER.

I intended it.—Those should be, in the mother country: and the legislature should be formed, by representatives from all the provinces, as well as from the divisions of the mother country ; but, the representatives of provinces should not be, proportionably numerous with those at home, for this reason, that distant provinces may require subordinate legislatures, and their representatives in the supreme legislature, should have, to engage their attention, only the general interests

interests of their constituents, as connected with those of the whole empire.

WHIG.

Ireland would think itself affronted, by a proposal of sending members to our parliament. When Scotland was brought to it, it was done by bribery, and against the sense of the nation in general. When a people have lost the substance, and principles, they are willing to preserve the forms of their antient government. We see how tenacious the parliaments of France are, of the little privileges left them; and, how * tenderly they are treated by their monarch, with all his haughtiness.—And the Americans, you know, have said, that they cannot send any representatives to parliament, on account of their distance from England.

PHILOSOPHER.

It is possible the people of Ireland may prefer an appearance to a reality; and it would be wrong to force on them, even an

G 4

advantage.

* Written before some late proceedings.

advantage.—The colonies, I believe, in general, are weary of the present contest; and yet are loth to give up their rights. I think, therefore, they would be glad to fall into this measure, if it appeared, as it does to me, to be the best for securing the enjoyment of their privileges.

COURTIER.

But, how would you have the parliament annual, when so great a part of the year must be consumed by the American representatives, in passing and repassing to and from England?

PHILOSOPHER.

If the Americans took not sufficient care in their choice, they must bear the effects of their imprudence. Indeed, those effects would teach them care; and their representatives might be elected or set aside, and others chosen in their stead, when they were not present. It would not be difficult to provide for all the inconveniences of this plan, if it was heartily entered upon.

WHIG.

I suppose you would have the internal regulation of the provinces, upon the same plan with ours.

PHILOSOPHER.

As much as possible. Their domestic government should be carried on, nearly, in the manner it now is; their municipal laws made at home; an appeal lying from them, to the supreme legislature; their money raised by impositions of their own, and in what sums they thought best; except in cases, where the concerns of the whole empire were in question, and the general strength was to be exerted: then a requisition to be made by the British parliament; and the sums specified, to be infallibly raised. Their militia should be on the plan of ours; every citizen being, in part, a soldier. It should be paid from their own taxes, and never summoned from the colonies, but in cases of general use and necessity.—Trade ought to be a great object in the whole empire, and the regulations of it in the supreme legislature,

legislature. All the parts of the empire should be advantageous, the one to the other; and no foreign commerce suffered; but in articles, either not to be procured, or not in sufficient quantities, in either of them.—Regulations of this kind, would form the only union and dependance, which are desirable and lasting, those of affection and interest.

CLERGYMAN.

I wish, with all my heart, that such an union could be effected.

PHILOSOPHER.

I dare say you do:—but such persons as we are, can do little more than wish: there are others, who can effect what we wish for; though, perhaps, in a way which we cannot point out: and, how they can forbear attempting to serve their country, when it so much wants their assistance, is, to me, unaccountable.—Lord Chatham, a few years ago, might have, even moulded the constitution into a new form, if he had thought it proper:—he has disappointed the people: and yet, he might recover their confidence,
and

and render them the most important services. Lord Camden, need only add activity to his abilities, and integrity, to be of infinite public benefit. Lord Mansfield, to the abilities and knowledge of the others, has the greatest advantages from his present influence.—How often have I lamented, that such a man should think himself well employed, in warding off blows from a worthless administration; and construing in its favor, some dubious parts of an imperfect system of laws; or, in opening a way to punish a few insignificant scribblers.—Is it not possible, I have often thought, to rouse up the best principles of this man's mind? Can his heart be dead to the noblest feelings, when his understanding is so clear; so penetrating; so comprehensive? It is, hardly possible, he should not see the true reasons of the present state of things; and he must love his country. He knows, that when a kingdom is divided against itself, it cannot stand; that, when the several parts of government are at variance, by pursuing the
contest,

contest, one may prevail over the other ; but the advantage can be only temporary ; and the whole, in the end, must be destroyed. —If he could be prevailed upon, to throw off the trammels of false honor, and attachment to power ; to leave the finesse and chicanery of law, to those plodders and false wits who are formed for them. If he would step forth ; and employ his genius in the assistance of a country, to which laws are become burdensome and insignificant ; which, certainly, cannot be saved by them ;—every happy consequence, might probably, follow. The senate, charmed by his eloquence, would yield to the force of truth ; the stupid designs of a weak administration ; of false patriotism ; and unmeaning opposition, would be disappointed. A Camden ; a Chatham ; a Littleton ; a Richmond ; a Temple ; a Sayville ; a Glynn ; and many more, who are, now, silent, and doubtful, would gladly assist him ; the body of the English gentry, clergy, and merchants ; the most sensible, and worthy part of the community, would join ;

join ; and all the people would support and bless him.

WHIG.

You are quite in raptures !

PHILOSOPHER.

And what would the man be in, who could realize such a scene ; enjoying, almost, the highest happiness, that it is possible to have in this world ; and leaving a name never to be forgotten.—But, I believe, I forget myself ; and you may, probably, think I aim to be a poet rather than a philosopher.—It is very likely, that men do not exert their abilities to the utmost, in serving their country, for reasons very similar to those, which prevent men, in their private capacity, from consulting, in all cases, their best interests : and a real patriot, and a truly good man, are characters which are but thinly scattered among us.

COURTIER.

So, so !—you are come down, all of a sudden. All these regulations cannot take place,

place, because no man is to be found to undertake them.

PHILOSOPHER.

I meant to say, that it is as difficult to find a real patriot, as a truly good man. The public man, is startled at the difficulties of serving his country, as the private one is at those of virtue; not, because they are insurmountable in themselves; but, because he has not the genuine principles of patriotism, as the other has not those of virtue. The fault is in the man, and not in the state of things.

COURTIER.

It is easy to censure the conduct of men, in situations which we are not much acquainted with; though, perhaps, it would not be easy to act differently from them. And we are not sensible of the immediate consequences of attempts at innovation; which are obvious to them.

PHILOSOPHER.

I am not censuring the conduct of others from a desire of changing places with
 2 them;

them; nor do I imagine, that I should avoid many of their errors.—As for the consequences of innovations; they are to be dreaded, only, when those innovations are great, sudden, and injudicious. I do not approve of the common doctrine of consequences: it is the principle of political, and religious roguery. A man, often, in private life, must not act according to his conscience, for fear of consequences; and, in a public station, he must not regulate an abuse in government, for fear of consequences. Why, in the name of God, should the consequences of vice be less to be dreaded, than those of virtue; of cowardice, than of courage; of craft, than of integrity.—In all cases, the rule of morality, and of policy, is to do what is right, and what appears best; and to leave the consequences to providence. When we apprehend any inconveniences from a good action; we are to guard against them as much as possible: but, we must not forbear the action itself.

But,

—But, I am trespassing on your province, Sir: I believe, however, that what I have said is sound doctrine.

CLERGYMAN.

Very sound; and very good.

PHILOSOPHER.

I wish it made one of the articles of your church: it would be intitled to subscription, as well as the best of them; and furnish a subject of useful instruction.

COURTIER.

Now he is aiming a blow at the church.

PHILOSOPHER.

Indeed, I am not; for I have talked myself out of spirits. However, I must tell you, in my plan of reformation, the church is not forgotten. I look upon the difficulties to secure, and increase our happiness, to arise, not from outward causes; but from want of public and private virtues; and that to be, in some measure, owing to the faults of our ecclesiastical establishments, and religious sects; and
to

to the negligence and wrong behavior of our divines.

COURTIER.

God bless you; smoke the parsons:—let us have some sport at their expence, if you should not be able to give them hints for their reformation.

PHILOSOPHER.

If I thought I could not give them hints for amendment, I would not, even, mention them; much less would I furnish the kind of sport, which you seem to want. It is the most vicious of any that is not downright cruel; and you see, it is indulged, mostly, by those, who would have the same pleasure in knowing there was no real virtue, as in discovering the concealed characters of some of its priests. It seems to remove a reproach which had been unjustly laid upon them.

COURTIER.

Your most humble servant; you pay me a compliment.

PART II.

H

PHILOSOPHER.

I really did not mean any thing personal. —You may have given into a wrong taste, without having the general reasons for it; or which is more probable, you were, only, in jest; and would have been, one of the first to have blamed me, if I had complied with your request.

CLERGYMAN.

I am not, so blindly devoted to the church, and the clergy, as not to see, they have faults: you say, that you are, now tired; we will, therefore, resume this subject another time.

PHILOSOPHER.

It is necessary to the completion of my design; and I can have no objection to your proposal.



END OF PART II,